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NEWS RELEASE

Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Christopher Wray, Acting Assistant Attorney General; Alice Fisher, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice Criminal Division and Michael Rolince, Acting Assistant Director in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington Field Office announced today the arrest of eight individuals who have been indicted on conspiracy, firearms and other charges for their alleged roles in a conspiracy to train and participate in jihad in Kashmir.

Initial appearances will be held at 2 p.m. today before Magistrate Judge T. Rawles Jones, Jr. in U.S. District Court in Alexandria.

The 42-count indictment, returned Wednesday by a federal grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, and unsealed today. The indictment names the following defendants: Randall Todd Royer, 30; Ibrahim Ahmed al-Hamdi, a Yemeni national and non-resident alien; Masoud Ahmad Khan, 31; Yong Ki Kwon, 27, a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Korea; Mohammed Aatique, 30, a Pakistani national and H-1 visa holder; Seifullah Chapman, 30; Hammad Abdur-Raheem, 35; Donald Thomas Surratt, 30; Caliph Basha Ibn Abdur-Raheem, 29; Khwaja Mahmood Hasan, 27, a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Pakistan; and Sabri Benkhala, 28.

Chapman, Hasan and Benkhala are believed to be living in Saudi Arabia.

The indictment charges: conspiracy; commencing an expedition against a friendly nation; receipt of a firearm or ammunition with cause to believe a felony will be committed; acquisition of firearms after arrival from a foreign country, with intent to engage in a crime of violence; transfer of a firearms for use in a crime of violence; conspiracy to possess and use a firearm in connection with a crime of violence; false statements; and using a firearm in connection with a crime of violence.

According to the indictment, the 11 defendants allegedly conspired to prepare for and engage in violent jihad on behalf of Muslims in Kashmir, Chechnya, the Philippines and other countries. As part of this conspiracy, the defendants allegedly obtained weapons, including AK-47-style rifles, and practiced small-unit military tactics in Virginia using paintball weapons and other equipment to simulate actual combat in preparation for violent jihad. The indictment alleges that some of the defendants traveled to Pakistan and trained with Lashkar-e-Taiba, an organization focused on conducting jihad against the government of India. The indictment also alleges that some of the defendants fired weapons at Indian positions in Kashmir. Lashkar-e-Taibi was designed a foreign terrorist organization by the United States on Dec. 24, 2001.

Mr. Wray stated, "Our success in the Nation's war on terrorism depends on our ability to

detect terrorist threats and prevent acts of violence. When individuals meet in the shadows of our Nation's capital to prepare for violent jihad, we will take action.”